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Can the Early Start Denver Model Be Considered ABA Practice?

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Abstract: The Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) is an evidence-based early intervention approach for young children with autism spectrum disorder. Although the ESDM is described by its authors as being rooted in applied behavior analysis (ABA), some states, agencies, and scholars consider the ESDM to qualify as ABA practice, whereas others do not. The purpose of this article is to examine the status of the ESDM in relation to the 7 dimensions established by Baer, Wolf, and Risley ("Some Current Dimensions of Applied Behavior Analysis," Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 1(1): 91–97, 1968) to define applied behavior-analytic research and intervention, as well as to discuss implications for the field.